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The Magazine of Rancho Mirage

THE WHITES
A Destined Journey

SWINGING CITY
Golf in Rancho Mirage

HAMBURGERS
AND HIGHBALLS
*Some Delicious
Samplings*

2016

SCOTT AND RACHEL WHITE

THIS IS THE NIGHT
Sheldon and Susan Good share
a moment together next to their
beautifully set table.

Dining

The Art of a GOOD PARTY

by CHRISTY MAJORS / photography by JON EDWARDS

EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE
Below: Susan's exquisitely set
table includes her favorite fine
china and matching placecards.



RANCHO MIRAGE RESIDENTS SHELDON AND SUSAN GOOD have the ultimate recipe for a great dinner party: Stir up one grouping of colorful guests with equal parts dependable menu, combine with a delightful ambiance, and serve — in casually elegant, refined style.

Sheldon, a successful Chicago Realtor and founder of Sheldon Good & Company and Good Realty Group LLC, and Susan, the writer behind HoneyGood.com, who last year was selected by the Sun Times Network as its first national columnist on its 70-city website and app, split their time between homes in the Windy City and Rancho Mirage. But regardless of their location, these seasoned entertainers, well-known for the delightful evenings they host for others — whether that’s eight or 50 — have dinner parties down pat. The couple starts compiling their guest list six weeks in advance in order to arrange the ideal mix. They avoid inviting cliques of friends, instead striving for disparate guests who will add to a lively dialogue — frequently started by Susan or Sheldon asking others to answer a beguiling question (but no politics or religion, please).

When it comes to the menu, Susan’s cuisine is always American and includes her signature salad, a NY strip steak, rack of lamb or Cornish game hen, a pasta side dish, and apple pie for dessert. Using her

tried-and-true recipes eliminates guesswork and dish failures, two major causes of party stress for a host. If entertaining more than eight guests, Susan enlists the help of a private chef and servers to ensure that she’ll be able to enjoy the party, too.

Sheldon is in charge of libations. Keeping with the American theme, he selects wineries from California. His favorites include Hall, Cakebread, and Justin.

Ambiance is an important final element to the Goods’ dinner party successes. The couple creates just-the-right tone through engaging musical selections that range from low-volumed Louis Armstrong during cocktail hour to an eclectic mix featuring John Lennon, John Denver, and Edith Piaf during dinner. Equally important is their table setting, which comprises a versatile canvas of wheat grass and red lacquer candles adorned with seasonal flowers. To make guests feel extra special, they bring out their Hermès china, Baccarat glassware, and individual place card holders.

And, of course, a successful party starts with the attitude of the hosts. So follow the Goods’ most important advice: “Be happy at your own party.”

Turn the page for some of the Goods’ favorite recipes.

IT TAKES TWO
Susan and Sheldon work
together to make sure no
detail is overlooked.



The Recipes

Susan Good shares her tried-and-true dishes for entertaining.

LAYERED GUACAMOLE APPETIZER

“I always choose this dish from the California Heritage Continues cookbook, recipes by the Junior League of Pasadena. Our guests devour it, and many email the next day asking for the recipe.”

Serves 8

- 4 ripe avocados, mashed
- 1/2 cup sour cream, divided
- 1–2 drops Tabasco sauce
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 4 ounces medium grated Jack cheese
- 4 medium tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 cup scallions, coarsely chopped
- 4 ounces mozzarella cheese, grated
- 3/4 cup sliced pitted black olives
- 1 cup chunky salsa
- Tortilla chips, blue corn chips
- 1 cup cilantro

- Combine avocados with 1/4 cup sour cream, Tabasco, garlic, salt, and lemon juice.
- On a large serving platter, layer avocado mixture, Jack cheese, tomatoes, scallions, mozzarella, olives, remaining 1/4 cup sour cream, and salsa.
- Place chips around the outside of platter, top guacamole spread with cilantro, and serve.



THE TIMELINE

Every hostess needs a plan, because the right schedule can make every large-scale party a piece of cake. Here, Susan shares her secret for getting everything done, on time and stress-free.

9 a.m.

“My table is set.”

11 a.m.

“Shelly makes sure the bar is set up and stocked to perfection.”

12 noon

“All platters, trays, wines, etcetera, are organized for the wait staff and chef.”

2–3 p.m.

“Flowers arrive.”

4–5 p.m.

“The chef and two other staff, one a bartender, arrive two to three hours ahead of time, depending on the menu and table count.”

Dining



ROCK CORNISH GAME HENS

“This is my own easy recipe. Our family and guests love it!”

Serves 6

- 2 tablespoons Lawry’s Seasoned Salt
- 2 tablespoons garlic salt
- 1 tablespoon Hungarian paprika
- 6 small Cornish hens, approx. 1 pound each
- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 jar currant jelly

- Preheat oven to broil. Mix salts and paprika together.
- Wash hens thoroughly, pat dry, then season with spice mixture. Place hens on a rack in broiler pan, breast side down. Baste hens with olive oil.

- Place broiler pan on middle rack and roast hens until crispy brown, about 8 minutes. Turn hens over, baste, and repeat. Turn oven down to 425 degrees and continue roasting for 20 minutes, basting three times. Reduce heat to 325 degrees and roast for 30 minutes more, continuing to baste every 15 minutes. To glaze, use a basting brush to spread currant jelly over both sides of hens during the last half hour of roasting time.
- Let rest 10 minutes and serve with your favorite side dishes.



COCKTAIL SAUCE

“Large shrimps are a luxurious hors d’oeuvre, but rather than use bottled cocktail sauce, I make my own.”

Makes about 2 3/4 cups

- 1 cup Heinz ketchup
- 2–3 tablespoons horseradish, fresh or prepared
- 2–3 drops Tabasco sauce
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 24 large cooked shrimp, chilled

Combine first four ingredients and chill until ready to use. Serve with shrimp.

6 p.m.

“Shelly and I dress and discuss the evening to come.”

6:30 p.m.

“Shelly turns on the music, modifies the lighting, checks the bar, and opens the front doors while I check with the chef and give the entire scene a quick once-over.”

6:45 p.m.

“Shelly and I sit at the bar and toast the happy evening ahead.”

7 p.m.

“Guests arrive for cocktail hour.”

8 p.m.

“Everyone is seated. I sit at one end of the table and Shelly sits at the other. (We exchange seats before dessert.) Shelly begins by making a toast that ends with our glasses held high as he says, ‘May there be peace in the world, and God bless America.’”